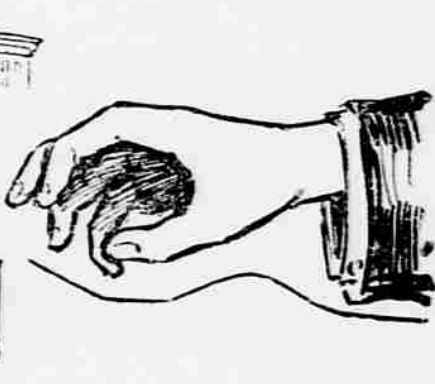


AN ASTOUNDING STORY
OF MUNICIPAL CORRUPTION

How the Combine of Nineteen, Holding Caucus Sessions Under Parliamentary Rules, Jockeyed With the Lighting Bill, First Demanding \$100,000 for Its Passage and Finally, Under Pressure of Public Clamor, Capitulated for \$47,500---History of Measure Like a Dramatic Travesty on Legislation as Conceived by the Public.

Tamblyn Sounded Note of Warning Three Years Ago, but Was Laughed at by Fellow Members.

The testimony at the various hoodie trials held thus far places together tales of the methods of municipal plunderers, which, if not proven, would not be believed, and which demonstrate that profits in the "legislation business" as in legitimate employments nowadays, are the result only of thorough organization.

The adventures of all Baha's land of forty thieves are no more remarkable than the audacity of the combine of nineteen in the House of Delegates of 1900. The emoluments accruing to the latter were probably greater because of their modern methods.

Of that House but six remain who are not under the ban of indictment or conviction. These are John P. Sweeney, James H. Cronin, Fred G. Zachritz, Lyle Sturdevant, Charles W. Holtecamp, John J. Burke.

This is the roll of honor, though it looks out that Sweeney and Cronin would have liked to share in the power and the glory of the combine, but were refused the honor.

The events and incidents of the career in hoodlory of this nineteen have been only half-told. The Julius Lehmann birthday party, at which the \$2,500 a Delegate was distributed for the lighting bill, is known, but not the preceding chapters in which \$500 a piece or a round \$100,000 was sought.

CENTRAL TRACTION, MISFEASANCE. An interesting story, thus far untold, has to do with the Central Traction measure. Delegate Ritter was the accredited agent of the House Combine of 1898. As a substantial incentive to look favorably on the railway consolidation bill, Ritter procured \$75,000 to be distributed among his fellows. He got it in the afternoon, went to his home, then grew fearful that he would be held up on his way to the House of Delegates' combine room at the old City Hall. He called in a couple of friends to help guard the lure.

Meantime his companions, waiting for the "coin," grew anxious. One was whispering that Ritter had "skipped." Hurried action was thought necessary and a committee was sent to Ritter's house. The committee entered and started upstairs. Ritter and his friends thought that the robbers had come, and met the Delegates with clubs and fists. A free-fight ensued in which serious bruises were sustained before the identity of the intruders was discovered. Then all was made up and \$2,000 apiece was distributed all round.

Subsequently five other House members, not in the combine, got wind of the matter, and threatened to "sneak." They, too, got their \$2,000, making twenty-five out of

twenty-eight members of the House who profited off the Central Traction deal. MONEY WAS PLENTIFUL.

It was "easy" money. Three thousand dollars apiece out of the Central Traction bill, \$90 apiece from the Burlington bill, \$30 apiece from the Missouri Pacific bill, \$250 apiece from the lighting bill, \$1,000 apiece for the Union Market bill, to say nothing of the Council members, whose prices were higher, even to \$50,000. Then there were the innumerable bills for small privileges, which are shadowed into nothingness beside the franchise measures.

And the story might be termed "The Virtuous Mr. Kelly." It has to do with the lighting bill. He expressed openly on the floor of the House his absolute horror of combines. He was a man of the people, and was elected by the people to a responsible position; therefore he deemed the operations of combines outrageous.

According to information received from reliable sources, the history of the lighting measure is like a play. The proceedings being a dramatic travesty on legislation, as the public conceives it. The bill was not in fact passed by the House in open session. These regular sittings were but a kind of mummery. The real legislation took place previous to the House meetings, when the combine went into caucus. It was at such a caucus, in October, 1899, that a price was placed on the lighting bill.

This can be called Act I.

PROCEEDINGS OF COMBINE. (Scene, anteroom to the Chamber of the House of Delegates. Nineteen chairs and speaker's table. Enter the nineteen.)

Speaker E. L. Murrell, president, rapping gavel. "The honorable combine will come to order."

(The combine members take seats, with the exception of one who tries the door to see that it is safely locked.)

Speaker Murrell: "It is unnecessary to call the roll or read the minutes of the last meeting. There are several old matters pending. How about that—switch bill. Our agent will report on that bill."

Agent: "Have to report that—has consented to our request for \$500 for the privilege, and now have the money."

Combine in unison: "Cough up!" Session suspended to divide the money. Speaker raps for order.

Speaker: "Any new business?" Julius Lehmann: "Council bill No. 41, providing for a ten years' lighting contract, is awaiting the action of the House, as doubtless you all know. The question is, gentlemen, what is it worth?"



HARRY A. FAULKNER

Combine member: "That is a good bill. We have to have light in this city of ours. If we fail to act the city may be left in darkness. That would be a public disgrace and calamity. Therefore, I suggest that we name a modest sum for our vote in this matter. I suggest that we demand only \$50,000."

(Laughter.) Second member: "My colleague has spoken correctly in stating that this is an important measure, but I am of the opinion that while he is modest in naming the figure mentioned, he is not modest enough. To be practical I don't think we'll get \$50,000. Let us be reasonable. I move that our price be \$75,000—that'll keep us for a while."

Speaker: "Mr. Tamblin, glad to see you. What is your opinion on this matter?" Tamblin, who is a new member, and visibly embarrassed: "I think \$75,000 a fair figure. But, gentlemen, have you no fear in talking so bluntly as this? Are you not afraid that the whole thing will come out one of these days and that we'll all go to the penitentiary for bribery?" (Loud laughter.)

NO FEAR OF PRISON. Member: "No danger of that. We've got too much pull. Nobody would dare prosecute us." George Robertson, showing a pistol: "Mr. Tamblin, if anybody were to 'peach' on us, I'd be the first to kill him with this gun."

Other members: "Robertson's right; traitors shall meet a traitor's end." Speaker Murrell, rapping loudly: "Come to order, gentlemen. Have business to discuss."

First Member: "I move that my \$100,000 proposition be put to vote." (Vote taken by ayes and noes, and ayes carry.)

Speaker: "The next order of business, then, is to elect an agent to act for us." Member: "I wish to put in nomination Mr. Helms."

Nomination seconded and, though opposed by Gutke, Helms is chosen.

Speaker: "Is there no other new business? No? The meeting of the honorable combine is then adjourned."

Scene 2 would properly be laid in the House of Delegates chamber, immediately after the above parliamentary session. Council bill No. 41 is duly reported by Mr. Tamblin. Combine members, including Mr. Kelly, argue against it eloquently. It goes down to defeat by combine vote. Delegate James H. Cronin, now Justice of the Peace, denounces combines in no choice language, and Delegate Charles F. Kelly states in the hearing of reporters that no legislator could be expected to vote for a bill unless he conscientiously believed it a beneficial and satisfactory measure. He, Kelly, was not convinced that the Westphal street lighting would compare with the arc-light system.

SCENE OF SECOND ACT. Act II could be laid in the caucus room as before. The meeting is called to order with the usual solemnity. After minor matters are taken up, Helms is called on to report concerning the \$100,000 deal. He reports that he saw the representative of the company desiring the franchise, who can be termed

Circuit Attorney Folk and Central Figures in Passage of Hoodie Measure.

"The Boss" and that "The Boss" had absolutely refused to pay such a large sum. The discussion as to the value of the franchise resumed, and finally the figure was reduced to \$75,000, and this time Gutke was commissioned to do the collecting.

Gutke's mission and its upshot would do for a separate scene and injects a little comedy. Gutke reported at a combine meeting that he had not been able to get \$75,000, but had secured \$30,000, which he produced. "Get out, Gutke," cried his brethren in hoodlory. "How much have you robbed?"

Gutke endeavored to explain that he had been as astute in the matter as man could be, and that the best he could do was

\$30,000. He thought a bird in the hand worth two in the bush, so had brought the money alone. The meeting almost broke up in a row, but the end was Gutke's detestation from the responsible position as "agent." Then it was that

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The whole trouble with the case lies in the fact that Westphal, who seems to be the only person able to furnish any definite information regarding the circumstances attending the old man's death, continues to

phal's hands an hour after the time he said he threw away the beer. The police believe that much more than \$7, which the boy says, he used to buy the bicycle, was in the purse.

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DETECTIVES FIND BOTTLES. Detectives went to the store, and in company with Doctor Leyh, secured the bottles of poison that they found there. These were of three kinds: Cyanide of potassium, bisulphide of mercury, and ammonium cyanide. None of the bottles, save one, which contained bisulphide of mercury, showed any signs of having been tampered with.

The self-sealing bottles which have been secured are two in number. One is entirely empty, save for some dust of the preparation or other chemical which hangs to its sides, while the other is full, and the seal has not been broken. It is the empty bromo-seltzer bottle that gives out the odor of peach kernels alluded to by the coroner.

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"Potash," said the coroner. "What do you know about the taste of potash?" "I mean that it tastes like potash smells," said the boy readily. "When I was in a grocery store once a woman brought potash and the beer tasted exactly like the way the potash smelled."

As potash has not a strong odor the coroner thought the statement strange, and when he announced at the first that murder had been done in the case he thought it curious that the boy should have said that it tasted like potash when it was suspected even then that cyanide of potash had been used.

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Kelly Openly Expresses On the Floor of the House His Absolute Horror of Combines.

Charles F. Kelly became the shining light of the nineteen. Kelly was commissioned to take back the paltry \$20,000, with the ultimatum that whatever might be true of the combine, they were not "cheaps."

SCENE IN COUNCIL CHAMBER. Act III. This was the grand finale. The scene is in the House of Delegates' Chamber, evening of November 26. The legislators arrive early, but it is evident that they are to have an audience. Standing about are groups of excited citizens with tips that are a silent threat. At 7 o'clock "The Boss" strolls in. It is his first visit to the City Hall at night in many a long year.

Speaker Murrell is about to take the chair, when he is hurriedly called to the "phone in the clerk's office. Other combine members saunter to the "phone." Outside the citizens are muttering vengeance against this, their chosen hand of legislation, while the latter are hawking over the price. Kelly reports that \$47,500 is offered. No decision is reached. The caucus adjourns. Speaker Murrell again takes his seat to preside over the lower house of lawmakers.

He raps the gavel loudly. The citizens are all attention. "The Boss" holds conversations in low tones over the lobby railing with members at the desks.

"The Boss" to Kelly: "Forty-seven thousand five hundred dollars, no more, no less."

Kelly: "The boys stick out for \$75,000." The regular order is begun. Combine Schnettler has a "little bill" to put through. It is disposed of. Other Delegates have new bills which are referred to committee.

Speaker Murrell: "The Committee on the Board of Public Improvements measures will report."

Tamblin is the chairman of this committee, which is the one having the lighting bill in charge. But he makes no move. There is more muttering on the part of the citizens, and a general riot seems imminent. Matters seem at boiling point. "The Boss" again whispers, "Forty-seven thousand five hundred dollars, last chance!"

The combine members interchange cabalistic signals by nods and glances. Delegate Lehmann rises.

Lehmann: "I move that the vote on Council bill No. 41 be reconsidered."

Kelly: "I second the motion." The Boss (soft voice): "I thought I'd get 'em."

Delegate Holtecamp: "I thought that bill had been defeated last Friday. What's the

meaning of this change of front? I want to get to the bottom of this thing. The bill can't be revived now."

Delegate Lehmann: "A vote to reconsider is in order. Mr. Speaker, I demand the vote."

PASS MEASURE UNANIMOUSLY. Vote shows an entire change of front in the combine. Every member who voted against the bill has now sold in its favor.

The measure passes by unanimous vote. Then came Kelly, denouncing obstruction tactics, and pointing out that he had his fellows, charged with forming "combines" to defeat the public interest, had suffered great injustice; that after the deliberation they had found that the bill promised well for the city, so they hearkened to the voice of the people whom they represented.

Later, when Kelly was expelled from the combine, his condemnation of that form of piracy knew no bounds. He became Kelly the Virtuous, the Champion of the People, until Joseph W. Folk have into prominence.

This was part of the aftermath of the last act in the House chamber. First was the Lehmann birthday party, when Kelly distributed the "loophole." The hearts of all nineteen were made happy that night by the \$2500 present.

In course of time came Murrell's flight to Mexico and his return. Then was Robertson, he of the pistol, confronted by Murrell, and Robertson "peached," but did not use the pistol. Then came the wholesale indictments of the nineteen and Kelly's visit to Europe. And, finally, Kelly's return in long-flowing overcoat and immaculate attire, to take his place in the prisoner's dock, no longer to laugh at Tamblin's faint-hearted, but prophetic, warning uttered at a combine sitting.

TO DECIDE MOTION TO-MORROW Snyder's Appeal for New Trial Will Be Disposed Of.

Judge O'Neil Ryan yesterday instructed Deputy Clerk Edward Chamberlain to inform counsel for the State and defense that he will render to-morrow morning his decision on the motion for a new trial, which was filed in the case of Robert M. Snyder.

The jury in the Snyder case on October 4 decided that the defendant was guilty of bribery in the Central Traction deal and fixed his punishment at five years in the Penitentiary.

Booker Priest and Lehman, Major William Warner and Morton Jordan defended Snyder. Circuit Attorney Folk and his assistants, Andrew C. Marney and C. Orrick Bishop, prosecuted the defendant.

CHAMP CLARK AND WALTER WILLIAMS WRITING "MISSOURI SKETCH BOOK."



CHAMP CLARK.

REPUBLICAN SPECIAL. Jefferson City, Mo., Dec. 12.—Congressman Champ Clark and Walter Williams, late editor of the Columbia Herald, are collaborating in the preparation of material for a book that will be issued about a year hence that will deal exclusively with the interesting events in the early history and development of Missouri and will treat at least in part the various characters that have contributed so much to the interesting history of the State.

They have decided to call it "The Missouri Sketchbook," the title being one best suited to indicate the character of the publication. Both men have been collecting material for years about the many humorous and novel characters that are so numerous in the various counties of the State and they have secured a wealth of the choicest material that is now being put in shape by both men.

The book will be made up entirely of sketches of the early settlers and their descendants, following the interesting features of the pioneer as shown in the lives and doings of their descendants.

Clark's breezy and interesting style of story telling and the wealth of humor he has developed with the stories he has been telling for years as the product of the people of Pike County are well known, and this material, handled as he and his able associates are able to handle it, ought to make one of the most interesting volumes of the year.

The plan is to have the book come out not much ahead of the opening of the World's Fair at St. Louis so that they will have the great opportunity of the Fair to sell the book. They believe it is a wide field for the sale of such a



WALTER WILLIAMS.

book and that they can keep their publishers busy during the Fair meeting the demand for the book.

A FERTILE FIELD. Talking of the material in the State of the character they will use in their book, Congressman Clark says, "I do not believe there is another State in the Union that has such a wealth of choice material for a book of sketches that combine much of human interest with facts of historical worth as can be found in Missouri. Every county in the State, almost, has had its contribution to the history of the State."

"The book will not pose as a State history. That has been told with sufficient clearness and completeness. What we aim to combine in the book is a collection of stories from life that will illustrate the real characteristics and oddities and novel experiences of the people who settled the State in the early days and who stayed there and helped make it over in the day following the war."

"Mark Twain found the living characters and the humor along the Mississippi that have furnished fun for millions of people for more than a decade, and he only walked along the river bank to find it. Williams and I have lived all our lives in the State, have met with the people, know the stories personally in many instances, and while we do not expect to find another Huck Finn, we know where there are plenty of fellows just like Huck in the instances of which we shall treat. I believe such a book will be read with interest by the public and furnish amusement for all."

CORONER SAYS CYANIDE OF POTASSIUM KILLED G. F. LEYH.

Odor in the Bottle That of Poison, of Which Large Quantities Are Found in the Beer the Old Man Drank—Conflicting Statements Made by Boy Clerk in Victim's Store.

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The self-sealing bottles which have been secured are two in number. One is entirely empty, save for some dust of the preparation or other chemical which hangs to its sides, while the other is full, and the seal has not been broken. It is the empty bromo-seltzer bottle that gives out the odor of peach kernels alluded to by the coroner.

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ROBERT WESTPHAL, George F. Leyh's clerk.

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